

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A management device to manage a share of costs related to network apparatuses, said management device comprising:

a storing unit storing management information to classify each network apparatus based on a combination type, wherein said combination type is a type of a combination of ~~a-business entity~~ies providing ~~a-service to at least one of the network~~ apparatuses and ~~the corresponding~~ shared costs of each of the business entityies related to the providing of ~~the at least one of the~~ network apparatuses, each network apparatus receiving the service from ~~the a~~ business entity specified by said combination type; and

a managing unit managing sharing of costs related to each network apparatus based on said combination type.

2. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The management device according to claim 1, wherein said management information comprises the shared cost or proportional share of business entities in each combination type, and when said combination type is changed relative to each network apparatus, said managing unit computes for each business entity a difference between the cost, which each business entity corresponding to the combination type of prior to the change is already bearing, and the cost, which each business entity corresponding to the combination type of subsequent to the change will bear.

3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The management device according to claim 2, wherein, when said combination type is changed relative to each network apparatus, the combination type of each network apparatus stored in said management information is updated to the combination type of subsequent to the change, said managing unit executes said computation relative to all network apparatuses for which said combination type is updated.

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The management device according claim 1, wherein each network apparatus is connected to a network.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The management device according to claim 2, wherein each network apparatus is connected to a network, and

said management device further comprises a communicating unit receiving via a network, a network connection request from each network apparatus, and, when said combination type is changed relative to each network apparatus, the combination type of each network apparatus stored in said management information is updated to the combination type of subsequent to the change,

said managing unit executes said computation relative to at least one of the network apparatuses which sent the network connection request.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The management device according to claim 1, wherein each network apparatus is connected to a network,

said management device further comprises a communicating unit receiving said combination type stored beforehand in a network apparatus with a network connection request from the network apparatus, and

when said combination type is changed relative to each network apparatus, the combination type of each network apparatus stored in said management information is updated to the combination type of subsequent to the change,

said managing unit compares said received combination type with the network apparatus combination type stored in said management information, and in the case of a match, sends to the network apparatus information corresponding to the combination type, and in a case that there is not a match, sends to the network apparatus information corresponding to the combination type stored in said management information, and furthermore, by sending to the network apparatus the combination type of subsequent to said change, updates the combination type stored in the network apparatus to the combination type of subsequent to said change.

7. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The management device according to claim 1, wherein each network apparatus is connected to a network,

said management device further comprises a communicating unit receiving said combination type sent from a network apparatus with a network connection request from the network apparatus, and

said managing unit compares said received combination type with the network apparatus combination type stored in said management information, and in the case of a match, sends to the network apparatus information corresponding, to the combination type, and in a case that

there is not a match, sends to the network apparatus information corresponding to said received combination type, and furthermore, updates the network apparatus combination type stored in said management information to said received combination type.

8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The management device according to claim 7, wherein, in a case that there is no said match, upon receiving predetermined temporary change information together with said combination type sent from the network apparatus, said communicating unit sends to the network apparatus information corresponding to said received combination type, and does not update said management information.

9. (ORIGINAL) The management device according to claim 1, wherein costs related to each network apparatus are the purchasing costs of said network apparatus.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A network apparatus capable of connecting to a network, said network apparatus comprising:

a storing unit storing a combination type of ~~at the least one business entity~~ies bearing costs related to the network apparatus, wherein said combination type is a type of a combination of ~~a business entity~~ies providing a service to ~~at least one of the network apparatuses~~ and the corresponding costs of the business entityies related to ~~the providing of the at least one of the network apparatuses~~, each network apparatus receiving the service from the business entityies specified by said combination type; and

a communicating unit sending said combination type stored in said storing unit with a network connection request to a predetermined server on the network.

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The network apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:

an overwriting unit, when said communicating unit receives said combination type from said server, overwriting said combination type stored in said storing unit with said received combination type.

12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The network apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:

an overwriting unit, when said communicating unit receives said combination type from said server, comparing said combination type stored in said storing unit with said received

combination type, and in a case that there is no match, overwriting the combination type stored in said storing unit with said received combination type.

13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The network apparatus according to claim 10, wherein, when a predetermined combination type is read from a removable storage medium placed in the network apparatus, said communicating unit sends the combination type read from said removable storage medium instead of said combination type stored in said storing unit with a network connection request to a predetermined server on the network.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A management method executed by a computer to manage costs related to network apparatuses, the method executed by the computer comprising:

classifying each network apparatus based on a combination type, wherein said combination type is a type of a combination of ~~a-business entity~~ies providing a-service to ~~at least one of the~~ network apparatuses and ~~the~~-corresponding costs of the business entityies related to ~~the~~ providing of the ~~at least one of the~~ network apparatuses, each network apparatus receiving the service from a business entity specified by said combination type; and

managing a share of costs related to each network apparatus based on said combination type.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A storage medium capable of being read by a computer, said storage medium storing a program comprising:

classifying each network apparatus connecting a network in accordance with a combination type of ~~at the least one~~ business entityies bearing ~~the~~-costs related to each network apparatus, wherein said combination type is a type of a combination of ~~a-business entity~~ies providing a-service to ~~at least one of the~~ network apparatuses and ~~the~~-corresponding costs of the business entityies related to ~~the~~ providing of the ~~at least one of the~~ network apparatuses, each network apparatus receiving the service from ~~the~~-a business entity specified by said combination type; and

managing a share of the costs related to each network apparatus based on said combination type.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A storage medium capable of being read by a computer, said storage medium storing:

data of a combination type of ~~at the least one business entity~~ies bearing the costs related to each network apparatus connecting a network, wherein said combination type is a type of a combination of ~~a business entity~~ies providing a service to ~~at least one of the network~~ apparatuses and the corresponding costs of the business entityies related to the providing of the ~~at least one of the network~~ apparatuses, each network apparatus receiving the service from the business entityies specified by said combination type; and

a program for sending said combination type with a network connection request to a predetermined server on the network.

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A management method executed by a computer to manage cost of a network apparatus capable of utilizing a service provided by a business entity, the method executed by the computer comprising:

managing the cost of a distributed network apparatus; and

in a case that a service capable of being utilized by said network apparatus is added, managing the sharing of the cost of ~~providing of~~ said distributed network apparatus by the business entity providing the added service and a business entity providing an existing service.

18. (CANCELLED)